

Fall 2019





Left: Reuben Lundquist was already a motor-man when the war started. On May 31, 1944 his wife Adeline and her sister Jeanette Johnson both joined him at North Side Station. They worked until 1946. All three attended the Motorettes Reunion in 1993. Minneapolis Star-Tribune photo, Hennepin County Library collection.

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Corrections & new info

Your editor mis-identified the location of last issue's rear cover photo. It's actually on 42nd Avenue S. at about 52nd Street. The southbound streetcar has derailed and lurched left, to be hit amidsthips by an unfortunately timed northbound car.

From Russ Olson regarding the inside front cover photo of a collision with a semi: "I lived at 37th St. and 26th Ave. S. and heard of the accident. I walked there and recall seeing this car being re-railed. A northbound car's coupler was connected by chain to the derailed front truck. The northbound car was then backed up pulling the derailed truck back onto the track. Some of the damaged front steel panels and parts (fender also) were removed and a shopman was able to operate the car normally. I don't remember if he took it directly to Snelling Shops or first to Lake St. Station (and later to Snelling to avoid rush hour traffic)."

Revisiting the Motorettes

-Aaron Isaacs

The women who were hired during World War II came to my attention back in 1993 when Russ Olson showed me the TCRT ledger that recorded the hiring of 464 motorettes and conductorettes from 1943 to 1945. It was a great story and resulted in a 50-year reunion of the women at CHSL and a subsequent Minnegazette article. That article was reprised in Twin Cities by Trolley, published in 2007. Apart from the occasional photo in Twin City Lines since then, this iconic chapter of labor history has received no attention.

Recently we've had all-female crews at Excelsior and Lake Harriet, and some media coverage resulted. It seemed the right time to revisit the motorettes, but while they are the best known streetcar women, there's more to the story. We'll take another look at World War I, cover women who worked in other jobs and touch on the first African-American motormen.

We have a TCRT report from 1916 that sets the stage. That year the company had 1634 employees. 68 (4 percent) were women. They were limited to office



Here are some of the women who held office jobs at Snelling Station in the 1920s. Ramsey County Historical Society collection.

employees, telephone operators and the Park Department (probably Wildwood Park).

World War I

The same conditions that caused employers to turn to women in World War II were also present in the first World War, although not to as great an extent. We have good documentation of the 21 conductors hired by Duluth Street Railway in 1918 and chronicled in the Winter 2011 Twin City Lines and Twin Ports by Trolley,

Front cover: This issue revisits the World War II motorettes and also shines a light on the other female employees in WWII and earlier, as well as the first African-American motormen. The cover photo shows a motorette on the Mahtomedi line stopping at Willernie to board a passenger. Until 1932, this was the junction of the line to Stillwater.



In 1918 Duluth Street Railway hired 21 female conductors, who they saddled with the awkward "conductress" title. Two of them lasted until the late 1920s. Included in the above 1929 group photo is the last one, Elizabeth Cook. Shortly thereafter she was laid off, along with most of the male conductors, as DSR rebuilt their streetcars for 1-person operation.



so that needn't be repeated here except to share a couple of previously unpublished photos. However, I did some more sleuthing and found this Duluth newspaper column that discusses them. The columnist's format was a semi-humorous letter to a fictional friend in rustic language about happenings in the big city. Be warned that sexual stereotypes abound.

Duluth Herald May 29, 1918
Friend Jas:

Well Jas, I rode home on a Woodland car and I came down this morning on a Lakeside car with one of them woman conductors that the streetcar company is employing to take the places of men, on account of the scarcity of labor.

I suppose that the reason that they is on suburban cars is that because most of the folks out that way is married, and it takes more than a zeppelin or a change in car schedule to get them

excited.

It ain't a bad idea, Jas, I'll say, especially for occupation for mothers-in-law, and I'll bet there won't be many men walking to work mornings, either, only I hope that nobody won't be late to work on account of being interested in the con and riding by their place of business.

It will take a little while to get used to the change, Jas, but it will have good results in the long run, no doubt.

The men will hang around the back end of the car and the motorman will have to talk to himself. Then if the trolley gets off, they will be lots of dudes to help put it on again. Then it ought to help the company's receipts, because I noticed that the car was packed the other afternoon, and it was only 4:30. Lots of women will be surprised to see their husbands coming home so early.

I don't see no reason why women can't make as good conductors as men. One thing in their favor, they don't have as many pockets as men and will be able to find their transfer punch without a search warrant. Of course, Jas, they will have to find a new place to hide their roll besides in their stockings, because them Lakesiders has a hard enough time getting home as it is. But think how late they would be, Jas, if they had to wait till the lady con went up front and chased the motorman out, pulled down the blinds and carefully made change for a five spot.

Another thing in their favor, Jas, is that is you get your hat knocked off in the crush while the con is pulling the string, you won't dare get mad. If they step on your toes and smile, or forget to give you back the right change, you will be just as good-natured as if it was payday and you was given a raise or maybe a little overtime.

And think, Jas, how nice it will be when you won't have to stand all them



This World War I-vintage photo is a mystery. It appears to show two women in TCRT uniforms, one a motorman and the other a conductor. Yet our index of the badge numbers shows men's names assigned to them at that time.

strong pipes and cigarettes and imitation cigars that is camouflaging around because no gentlemen will be smoking in the presence of the con.

"Why do they have women cons and not have women motormen?"

asked a tired looking man from Coleman's addition.

"Because," says Mac, "you can make a conductor out of a woman, but how are you going to make a motorMAN out of a woman?" A besides, a woman

has to have the last word and tell you when to go ahead and when to stop.

"It's all right", said the T.L.M. "I'll stand it as long as I don't have to do the family washing."

Were women employed by TCRT during WWI? It's something of a mystery. One of the newspaper stories from 1943 says no. I've found no newspaper stories that say yes, but we have one photo that clearly shows two women in WWI-era uniforms. When I looked up their badge numbers, they were attached to men's names, so it's a mystery. If there were any women streetcar crew members during World War I, they were soon all gone, not to reappear until World War II.

Motorettes

As late as 1942, TCRT didn't think it needed to hire women. Witness this short news item.

St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press
2-26-42

Women street car conductors and motormen are still in the distant future for this area, Twin City Rapid Transit Co. officials said Thursday. While admitting that women may be hired eventually, they said a large number of their present employees have dependents or are beyond the age limit for military service. It was also pointed out that the drain on manpower is not so great in the Twin Cities area as in some of the more highly industrialized sections of the country.

That position changed over the next year. The first of 338 motorettes were deployed on July 6, 1943 at Nicollet Station and Snelling Station, having been hired a month previously. They were trained to do both jobs, motorman and conductor. By February 1944 they were working at all the carhouses. Beginning in 1945, 126 conductorettes were hired. They were probably so

designated because it took less training. There were also some 50 women hired to clean streetcars and buses and work in the shop.

Their tenures were usually short, often less than a year. Two of the first 15 left after less than a month. The high point was June 1945 when 183 motorettes and conductorettes were on the payroll. The last hire was in November 1945. Here's the year-end breakdown.

Year	Hired	Left	Active
1943	80	19	61
1944	244	124	171
1945	127	177	121
1946		77	44
1947		9	35
1948		8	27
1949		1	26
1950		3	23
1951		1	22
1952		4	18
1953		3	15
1954		3	12

The last one to retire was Ruby Peterson in 1980. I started at Metro Transit in 1973 and remember riding her bus. Because of her seniority she had run number 1 on Selby-Lake. She was tiny, wiry and wore a hairnet. The older GMC buses had no power steering and she had to stand up and lean on the wheel to turn a corner.

Ruby was tough and no nonsense. She told me that when she first showed up at the Snelling employment office on November 4, 1943, they told her she was too small to be hired. She asked what she needed to do to change their minds. They said climb onto a streetcar roof and pull down the trolley pole. If you've noticed, climbing atop a streetcar means scaling those little flip-down handholds. Kinda scary. Up went Ruby, down came the trolley pole and she was



Above: Dorothy Tyler, 1944-1946
Below: Virginia Blessing, 1943



Above: Helen Murphy, 1943-1946
Below: Marie Hagen, 1944-1946



Above right: Della Olson, 1943-1944
Below: Florence Hill, 1944-1946



hired. As the last motorette, she was adopted and honored by the Women's Transportation Seminar, and became something of a celebrity in local transit circles. Along with 44 others, she attended the 50-year motorette reunion we put on at CHSL in 1993.

Old newspapers give glimpses of their experiences.

Minneapolis Journal
6-28-43

Classes for the first women in its history to be hired as streetcar motormen, conductors or bus drivers were started today by the Twin City Rapid Transit Co. at its Snelling avenue station. The trainees will receive classroom training and will then take turns running a streetcar under direction of experienced trainmen.

The women will probably be called operators, rather than be labeled by trick names being used in some other cities, a company official said.



Top Left: Edna Olson, 1944-1945
Top Center: Ruth Shepard, 1943
Top Right: Ellen Campbell, 1944-1954



Left:
Gertrude
Gerke, 1945

Right:
Margaret
Anderson,
1944-1947



Minneapolis Journal 7-7-43

It was a soprano voice that called out the streets on some Nicollet avenue streetcars today. Sleepy passengers, peering out from behind morning papers, found they were being driven downtown by a 'feminine motorman' handling the controls with almost veteran efficiency. Three smartly uniformed women who today became the first female operators of city streetcars in the 65 year history of the Minneapolis Street Railway Co. were Mrs. Ida V. Vrooman, Kathryn Sherwood and Mrs. Blanche Lindall.

Still technically students, they were working under supervision of experienced operators although all have completed classroom work and trips on training cars.



Their summer uniform consists of a dark blue slack suit, gold trimmed, and cap with a soft crown.

They will take turns functioning as both conductor and motorman and will be joined soon by other women now in training, streetcar officials announced.

Minneapolis Journal
7-8-43

Woman streetcar operator finds the job is not as easy as she thought

By Catherine Quealy, staff writer

"It's a job that keeps you on your toes--literally and figuratively" That's the way Kathryn Sherwood, one of the first three women operators of Minneapolis streetcars, felt about it as she reported at the station after her first day on the Nicollet avenue line.

Her hands were a little grimy and her polish chipped, her nose was shiny and her dark blue uniform was proving hot--but she likes the job, she

Top left: Marcella Fernelius, 1943-1957

Top middle: Mona Griffin, 1944-1952

Bottom left: Florraine Uden, 1944-1945

Above: We don't know the name of this motorette. It's a Minneapolis, Star-Tribune photo of a mechanical failure, Minnesota Historical Society collection.



Professional photographers were hired to promote the 1945 arrival of the first PCC car, which was built as Pittsburgh #1547 but became TCRT #299. In the fashion of the time, young women were brought in to be decorative. We don't know the identity of the motorette in the transfer table shot at upper right, but Donna Turbes (1943-1945) is the very definition of cool in the above photo, also taken at Snelling Shops.



declared.

And she knew something of what she was getting into after traveling for 11 years for a manufacturing company, driving her own car and covering five states.

However, Miss Sherwood had the help yesterday of two veterans, N. E. Hoglund, conductor, who's been on the cars since 1905, and Nels Pearson, motorman, who has served for 44 years.

I caught her on the last run in the late afternoon. Passengers were mostly women, going home from shopping. No woman ever got so much attention from women. Whenever she had any conversation with a customer, the rest of the passengers craned their necks to see and hear what was going on.

The uniform pockets seemed to fascinate them. A girl just can't be hauling dollar bills out of back pocket, thrusting a book into a jacket pocket and

look casual about it. At least not when it's new to her.

A couple of men on the back platform were reading the Star Journal article which carried a story and picture of the women operators. They passed the paper around to the others.

A blind man who boarded the car in the late morning was puzzled by the new situation, Hoglund said. "Token?" Miss Sherwood asked him. "What goes on here?" he demanded. Then Hoglund explained.

The women who went on the job yesterday and those now in training got a good deal more instruction than the average man because the company expected the public to be a little critical, Miss Sherwood said.

"I never used to think there was a lot of work to this job, but in addition to taking fares, calling streets, making change and answering questions on directions, you have to do a lot of



Things didn't always go well.

Top: Katherine Ranten (1944-1945) is getting ticketed for something.

Bottom: Conductor Edith Johnson (1944-1945) looks on as her motorman gets medical attention following a collision.

Both Minneapolis Star-Tribune photos, Minnesota Historical Society collection.

bookkeeping, and you've got a big responsibility for the safety of the passengers," she said.

Women operators had to have perfect health, and the preference was given for long safe-driving records.

"We may be a little slower at first, but we'll be safe drivers," Miss Sherwood declared.

They are trained to handle both ends of the car and may eventually be put on as bus drivers, she said.

St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press
8-6-43

Lars Pershy, 41 years old, charged with disorderly conduct for alleged abuse of a woman streetcar conductor, failed to appear in police court this morning and his \$25 bail was forfeited.

Conductor Albert Carson told police Pershy had sworn at Selma Klawitter, a student conductor.

St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press
8-24-44

Florraine Uden, 21, a streetcar motorette, was tagged for starting a vehicle when conditions were unsafe, after her tram hit a truck, inflicting back injuries.

They weren't all motorettes

The newspaper stories reveal that women held other operating jobs.

St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press
2-14-44

Mrs. Ethel Peterson, a **streetcar starter** at Seven Corners, has been in the habit of leaving her purse in a nearby drug store while working. Saturday night when she went to get the purse it was missing and so was \$60.

5-18-45
St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press
'Ma' is trolley switchman

Getting streetcars in off the line after the evening rush and out again for early morning service is the intricate job of Mrs. Laura Rauch, the only woman **switchman** in the Twin Cities.

Every car must be thoroughly cleaned and overhauled at given intervals and emergency repairs made as soon as cars are brought in.

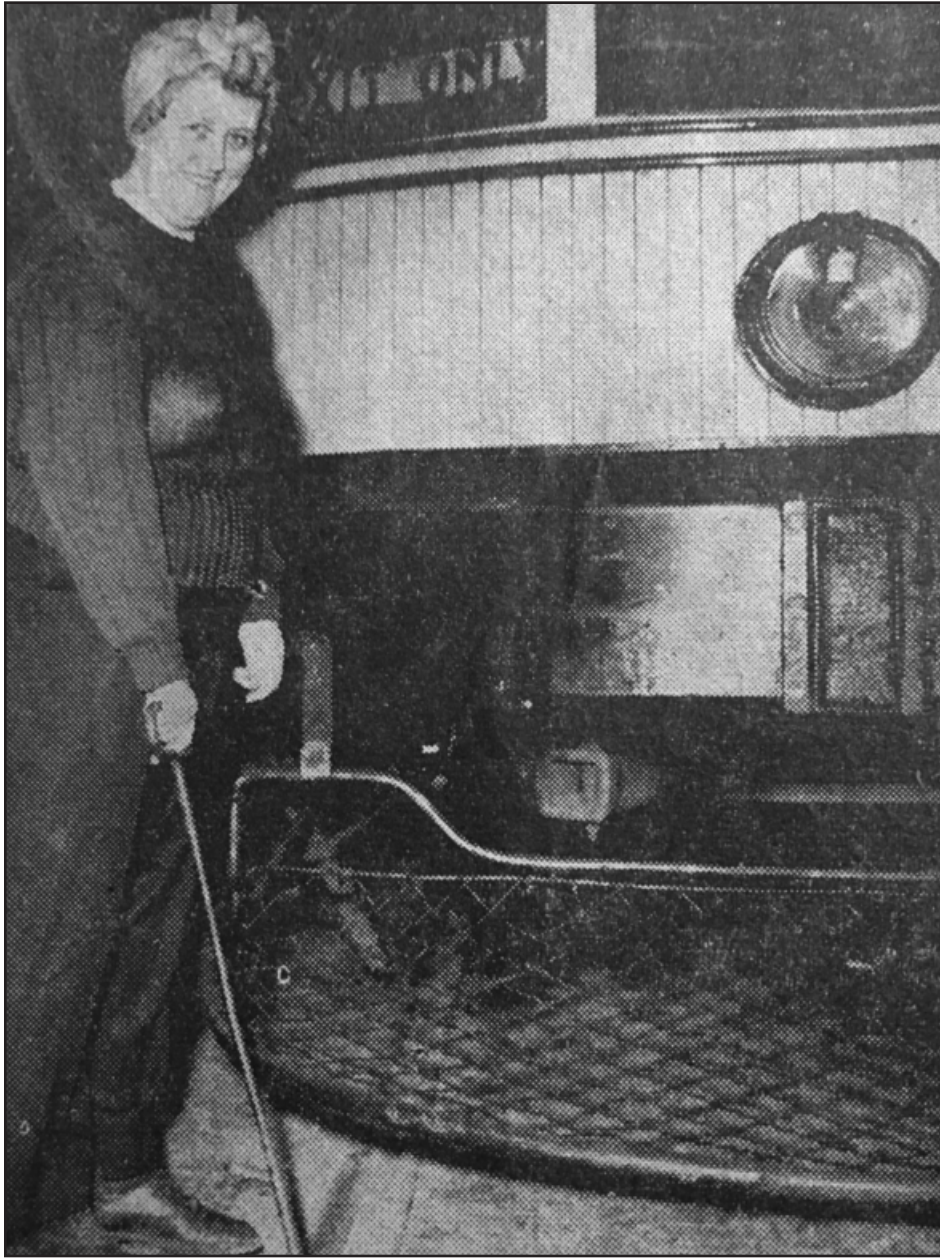
Mrs. Rauch routes the cars into the proper shops for each type of servicing and lines them up to leave the University and Snelling barns on schedule in the morning.

The valuable minutes between switching operations are used for minute maintenance jobs such as oiling the street car doors, Mrs. Rauch says. Before the cars go out in the morning she turns on the heaters and cuts in the air pressure for brakes.

She's "Ma" to fellow trainmen old and young, and many a green conductor has bolstered his morale by confiding his problems in Mrs. Rauch.

Mrs. Rauch prefers working the night trick so she can have dinner with her husband, son and daughter. 16-year old Mary Lou attends Monroe high. John, 17, goes to Vocational high and works part time as a street car con-





ductor. An older son, Clayton, is with the Army in France.

When the worry and the work of the war are over she says she'll be more than glad to return to her kitchen.

Above: Laura Rauch.

Right: Esther Templeton, St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press photos

11-18-47

St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press

Versatile woman also is mechanic

One of the busiest and most mechanically accomplished women in St. Paul is Mrs. Esther Templeton.

Chief clerk of the mechanical department, Twin City Rapid Transit Co., the busy woman, besides holding a highly specialized and complicated position, can not only fly an airplane, drive streetcars, buses, trucks and autos--but can also repair them.

Now in her 24th year of consecutive employment with the streetcar firm, she is a familiar figure in the office of

the Snelling car barns and shops where she supervises a crew of nine office workers.

Modest, quiet and unassuming, she is responsible for a great share of the smooth efficiency of St. Paul's trams and buses. A former school teacher, she took the position of timekeeper with Twin City Lines in 1923 so she would be close to the University of Minnesota where she intended to further her teaching education.

However, Mrs. Templeton liked her job with the streetcar company so well that she gave up plans for teaching. After serving as timekeeper at various



car barns, she was promoted to her present position, which she has held for 20 years.

Besides her strenuous work and many hobbies which include horse-back riding, she still finds time to attend business administration classes at the University of Minnesota two nights each week.

Mrs. Templeton is holder of a student pilot license and flies several times a month from Holman and Fleming fields, adding to her hours in the air so she may become a full-fledged pilot.

She likes to "try out" new streetcars and buses as they are delivered to Snelling Station and a visitor may be surprised, as he sees a new piece of equipment roll to a perfect stop, to wit-

ness a comely woman at the controls. According to attendants there, Mrs. Templeton's mechanical ability is undisputed and was proven during the past war when the shortage of skilled mechanics was acute. She often helped out then.

Mrs. Templeton's husband is superintendent of the St. Paul City Railway.

11-26-43

St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press

Keeping buses and street cars clean is daily job of 47 Twin Cities women

47 Twin Cities women have a cleaning day on their hands every day that makes a housewife's Spring cleaning look like a minor dusting job.

These women, along with five men supervisors, see to it that thousands of

St. Paulites who daily commute on street cars and buses ride on shining cars, walk on clean floors and sit on dusted seats.

They are the members of the Twin City Lines cleaning crews that keep buses and street cars of the system looking spic and span. Working in two shifts, these crews keep cars in shape through all kinds of weather conditions.

Their daily chore is to sweep and dust every one of the lines' 900 odd buses and trams. At least once a week the street cars and buses' exteriors and interiors are washed. Once a month they receive a general cleaning.

The crews' pride and joy is an automatic washing device that completely scrubs a bus in three minutes. It takes a man or woman one hour to wash a bus or street car by hand.

Employees have the gigantic job of cleaning buses and street cars down to a timed system. For the daily cleaning it takes a worker six minutes to sweep and 20 minutes to dust a tram or bus. Incidentally, superintendent of equipment L. G. Barnes reports the women are more thorough cleaners. Five of his women are 25-year veterans with the others being added during the last two years as the armed forces and war work drained the men from his staffs.

It takes two workers eight hours to completely give a car or bus the general cleaning each month. This consists of scrubbing every inch of both the inside and outside of the car.

Greatest bane of the car cleaners is gum on upholstering and cane seats. Another is the ripping of seats by commuters.

A general cleaning underway. St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press photo, Minnesota Historical Society collection.

Bus & Trolley News excerpts

Bus & Trolley News was a newsletter for TCRT employees published jointly by their union, ATU Local 1005 and the credit union. It was full of little gossip news items. Here are the ones that involved motorettes.

Sept. 1943

Bro. Kooch had one of the new, shall we call them "motorettes", on South St. Paul. He said she was a darn good driver. She wasn't afraid of a darn thing.

Oct. 1943

East Side Station

What, no sheets in dormitory No. 2? Well, girls, I guess you will have to furnish your own sheets. Mrs. Marguerite Jordan looked all over for one and said she was never so cold in her life as she was the first night she had to sleep in the station.

Duluth Station

Wonder why all the carhouse come to work all spruced up? Can it be they have got their back pay or is it the feminine influence of those new car cleaners?

Snelling Station

Br-r-r. Winter weather is sneaking upon us. Just a tip to some of the new employees. When you are getting relieved, see that the fire is taken care of. You know some day you will make relief and you would not like a cold car. To the women, you won't get dirty taking out the ashes and putting on coal, not much anyway.

Nov. 1943

North Side Station

Our first motorettes, Blanche A. Ecklund No. 4101 (1943-1945) and



Agnes L. Parr No. 4103 (1943), have made their debut, and are busy learning by actual experience the first lesson of streetcarring, viz: Why street cars run in bunches.

Dec. 1943

East Side Station

I wonder what Sister Marcella Roche and Bro. Briggs were doing on top of their streetcar the other night. They say it was to change the trolley. We say it was the stars they were looking at. But Marcella says it was cloudy that night.

June 1944

Duluth Station

Most of us remember when our cars went down to Faulkner (*Former St. Paul Southern track in Inver Grove, run by TCRT 1927-1933*). Well, Kathleen wanted to find out what it is like down there, so she started to drive down there, but she ran out of trolley wire and rails.

Nov. 1944

Lake Street Station

New and bright badges with the inscription "Operator" have been issued to the girls instead of the masculine and misleading "Motorman" badges. So now you may call the girls "operator", which to some sounds better than the rather outlandish "motorette".

Feb. 1945

Lake Street Station

The PCC car has been making the rounds of the different stations so the boys and girls could have a look at the wonder and a free ride.

June 1945

East Side Station

My morning stroll down East Hennepin brought a chuckle to this

sober soul. A sign reading "Men Wanted" was posted on a store window. Who but Jenny No. 138, was scribbling, "Ya, I want one too". And such is life for the girl of '45.

Ardeth Rasmussen (1944-1945)

Feb. 1946

Nicollet Station

Some time ago a black cat got on Groden's car at 26th Street and 4th Avenue. He was so busy he didn't have time to put it off so he took it to Glenwood and Aldrich and back to Franklin where he put the cat off. There the cat got on somebody else's car and rode to 48th Street and 4th Avenue. This operator put it on Marge Chmielewski's (1945-1947) car with instructions to put it off at Franklin. When Marge got down to Franklin she turned around and asked where the cat was that wanted off at Franklin. When nobody answered she walked back in the car and dragged the cat from underneath a cross seat, put him on her shoulder, and started for the front door. One of the passengers spoke up and said, don't put him off, I'll pay his fare. Marge said. no I'm sorry, this is his stop and I'll have to put him off here. Thus ends the story of the hitchhiking cat.

African-Americans

The MSM photo archive has hundreds of photos of streetcar crews going back to horsecar days in the 19th century. That includes a number of collages that show all the trainmen at a given station. If there were any African-American motormen or conductors they ought to be visible. I've looked through them all and only found one possibility. It's a group photo taken at North Side Station when it opened in 1915 (above right). Otherwise, nothing.



Above: At North Side Station in 1915 Conductor 1642 in the center may be African-American. If so, he's the only such person visible in any of hundreds of trainman photos in the MSM collection.

Below: Readus Fletcher (left) and Lyle Lasley, seen here as bus drivers in 1956, were among the first group of African-American motormen to be hired in 1947.



While the Twin Cities black population wasn't large, the communities were well established and located close to the carbarns. We can only conclude that discrimination kept African-Americans out of the TCRT workforce.

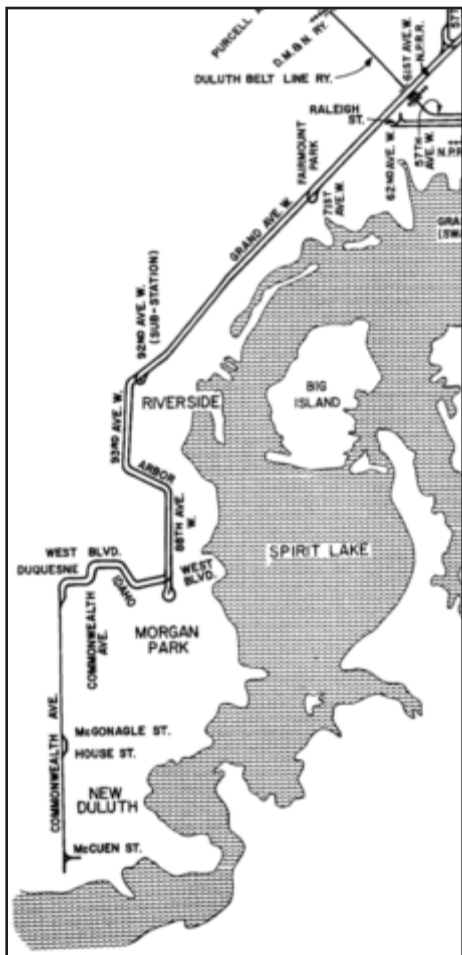
That didn't change until 1947, when returning World War II veterans broke the color barrier. For Black History Week, Metro Transit employees found and interviewed one of those men,

William "Dub" Massie. He was the fourth black employee at Snelling Station and named seven others who hired on about the same time, including one mechanic. Management must have had a change of heart, because Massie says he was encouraged to apply by his mother, who said TCRT was hiring. Massie didn't mention anyone trying to keep him out.

Morgan Park, Gary and New Duluth

-Aaron Isaacs

Duluth's longest streetcar line extended 12 miles from downtown to West Duluth, Morgan Park, Gary and New Duluth, all of which were just neighborhoods with the Duluth city limits. It was extended from 71st Avenue West and Grand Avenue to Morgan Park in 1915-16, then on to Gary and New Duluth in 1917. The reason was the opening of the United States Steel mill in Morgan Park, as



This map shows Morgan Park as it looked when fully developed. The single family homes of management employees were at lower right. As you move to the left, houses become more modest and multi-family housing appeared. The steel plant is off the map at left. The streetcar from Duluth entered at upper right and followed 88th Avenue, which was lined with commercial buildings, a community center and school. It ended at a streetcar loop in front of the steel plant gates. Cars continuing to Gary and New Duluth turned right and followed a curving street out of town. The empty blocks were never developed. Morgan Park was also served by commuter trains of the Northern Pacific Railroad, whose depot is on the map below the club and administration buildings. The track is still in place and used by the endangered Lake Superior & Mississippi tourist railroad.

well as a shipyard in Riverside, about 88th Avenue West. The line passed through quite a bit of open country to reach those destinations. Our streetcar 265 was sold to Duluth to run the new line.

In the fashion of the time, Morgan Park (named of course for J. P. Morgan)

was designed as a company town. Arnold Alanen's book "Morgan Park" quotes US Steel's housing specialist that the company planned to make Morgan Park "the most perfect and ideal industrial city in the world". It offered a mix of single family houses and multi-unit buildings of four to

eight units. The single family houses ranged from small to large, reflecting their occupants' status within the company hierarchy. Homes for management were clustered in the northeast corner near the St. Louis River. Worker housing was on the other side of the development closest to the mill.



To reach Morgan Park, DSR had to build through miles of open or sparsely populated country. The City required them to run the line with a 5 cent fare. The above view looks west from the previous end of track at 71st Avenue W. Below: Riverside, at about 88th Avenue W., was a small enclave surrounding the former shipyard.



All the housing, in fact all the buildings, were constructed of grey concrete block. Residents rented from the company. This being a complete town, there was a school, commercial building that included a company store, cafe, hospital, Catholic church, Protestant church and what today would be called a community center. A large streetcar waiting shelter complete with restrooms was built where the line came close to the management neighborhood.

The streets were curving or angled, and the town site was centered on 88th Avenue, a divided roadway with a grassy median. The streetcar ran down the median. Initially it ended at a turning loop at the steel plant gate. A year later it was extended to Gary and New Duluth. Making a 90-degree right turn just before the loop, it exited Morgan Park via another curving street that passed the worker housing.

Leaving Morgan Park, the line headed through more open land and turned left (south) along the east side of Commonwealth Avenue (Highway 23). There it served the cement plant which had been built as part of the mill complex. South of the cement plant it entered the middle of Highway 23, passed under the Duluth, Missabe & Northern's line to the mill, and entered Gary.

It's easy to get Gary confused with New Duluth, which it abuts. New Duluth existed before the mill as a station on the original Lake Superior & Mississippi railroad to the Twin Cities. It ascended the St. Louis River valley through what is now Jay Cooke State Park, a difficult stretch with several high trestles and subject to landslides. It was soon replaced by the "Short Line" which took a different route to the north. A stub was kept in place as far as Fond du Lac, just west of New Duluth. That route featured commuter



Here are two later-year views at 92nd Avenue W. Above: Looking east from the roof of the DSR substation. Note the wood sidewalk and the streetcar waiting shelter at center. Minnesota Highway Department photo, Minnesota Historical Society collection. Below: Looking west at the substation and the turning loop that surrounded it. Shortline cars for the shipyard turned here. The building still stands today.



This coincided with the 2.8 mile extension of the streetcar to New Duluth from Morgan Park. Soon Gary-New Duluth were housing as many employees as Morgan Park, but it was a different class of employee. African-Americans (there were about 100) and southern and Slavic Europeans were barred from Morgan Park. At least Gary and New Duluth residents could own their homes, while Morgan Park residents had to rent. That said, Gary and New Duluth became known for substandard housing.

The bias against African-Americans included wage discrimination. They were paid less than their white co-workers. The Ku Klux Klan was active in Duluth and in 1920 three black men were lynched. To quote Alanen, "The model town was a place that blacks strictly avoided...(One resident) recalled that he always felt 'a twinge of fear' riding through Morgan Park on the streetcar. 'Never get off the streetcar in Morgan Park' was the unwritten rule that Duluth's African-American parents gave their children. Parents 'were always concerned that if something went wrong with the streetcar and we had to get off in Morgan Park, we might be in harm's way'".

In addition to the 500 Morgan park employees who probably walked to the mill, another 500 or so rode the streetcars from Gary and New Duluth. The majority had to commute by streetcar from Duluth and West Duluth. This resulted in one of the biggest reverse commute movement in Minnesota streetcar history. Only the South St. Paul stockyards would have been comparable. Each morning from 6-8 AM Duluth Street Railway dispatched 37 streetcars west from Duluth and West Duluth. Half of them only served the McDougall Shipyard. The other 18 continued beyond to Morgan Park or New Duluth. From a

trains that were initially the only public transportation to Morgan Park before the streetcars arrived.

During World War I about 3500 workers were employed at the steel mill. Morgan Park's total population was 2000, of whom 500 were steel plant employees. Given the mill's distance from Duluth, more nearby housing was needed. Knowing the mill was coming, private developers created Gary just west of the mill on the northern border of New Duluth. It was named for the same US Steel executive as Gary, Indiana.

According to Alanen, in 1916 the population of Gary and New Duluth increased by 40 percent in six weeks.



Above: 88th Avenue curves into Morgan Park, passing the United Protestant Church.
Below: The Beverly Street waiting station.



surviving load check we know that those cars left West Duluth with 1284 passengers, an average load of 71 in cars that seated 50.

After the war employment at the plant dropped to about 1700, and the shipyard folded but ridership was still heavy. The area between 71st Avenue West and Morgan Park remained largely unpopulated. Housing was never built on the platted west side of Morgan Park and the land remained empty from there to Gary.

The line settled into a routine, with 10-minute rush hour service and 20-minute midday. In 1937 it was shortened to the steel plant loop and the Fond Du Lac shuttle bus was extended to serve Gary-New Duluth. Final abandonment came in 1939.

Below: Looking west at the median streetcar tracks leading to the steel plant. The main retail commercial building is at left. Northeast Minnesota Historical Society collection.



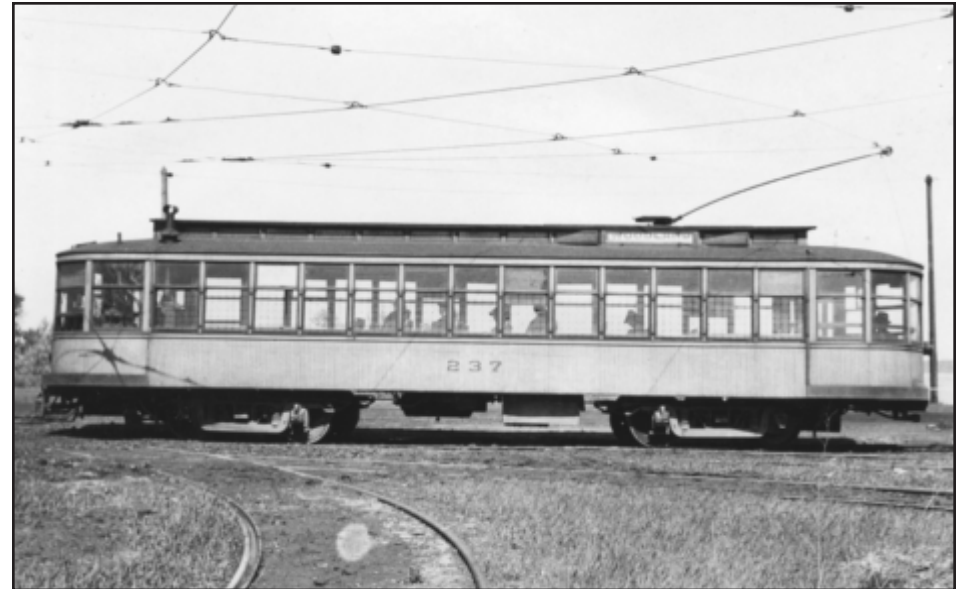


Above and below: Looking both ways on the 88th Avenue median.

Right top: Approaching the street mill and streetcar loop.

Right middle: An eastbound car lays over on the Morgan Park loop.

Right bottom: The Morgan Park loop. Note the storage track inside the loop.





Above: From Morgan Park to Gary, the line followed Commonwealth Avenue west through open country. These views look both ways. Note the railroad alignments on the hillside.
Below: Commonwealth Avenue turned south 90 degrees and the track followed it. At right is the cement plant associated with the steel mill.



Above: This view near the cement plant shows its and Gary's proximity to the steel mill.

Below: Passing under the Duluth, Missabe & Northern, the track entered the street and climbed a short hill into Gary's business district.





Looking both ways on Commonwealth Avenue on the north edge of Gary. The cement plant is visible in the right distance.





Above: The end of the line in New Duluth. Below: Same place, in really bad weather.



50th & Xerxes--1954

Recently Tom Hanson contacted the museum to donate 32 photos he took as a child in 1954. They show the last days of the Como-Harriet and Oak-Harriet lines. Of note are three views of the 50th and Xerxes intersection, where Oak-Xerxes shortline cars wye'd out and Oak-Harriet cars turned east towards the end of the line at 50th and Penn. We previously had only two photos of this intersection.



An Oak-Harriet car turns east onto 50th Street. The people at left are passengers who just alighted. At left is the wye track for short-line Oak-Xerxes cars.







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